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Kids Connect at Camp Catch Up

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This summer, 108 children ages 8 to 19 who are or have been state wards will attend Camp Catch Up for a weekend.

More important than the games, fun and food is the chance for these siblings, who've been separated by foster care or adoption, to reconnect again.

Camp Catch Up was created eight years ago because we know how important siblings are to each other. Our first choice is to keep siblings in the same foster or adoptive home. When children can't be placed together, we work to keep their family ties in place.

Campers can do fun activities with their brothers and sisters like canoeing and swimming and also strengthen their relationships. Some siblings don't get to spend much time together during the year, and this is a chance to really spend some quality time together.

The kids are so happy to be together, and we're seeing more siblings want to attend Camp Catch Up every year. These brothers and sisters have a great time as they share what's going on in their lives.

Last year when I went to Hordville to say 'hi' to those Camp Catch Up kids, I was amazed at the wonderful turnout. Kids with smiles of their faces were everywhere and laughter filled the air.

Kids wearing brightly colored tee-shirts were running around playing games, swimming, doing crafts and most importantly, spending time with their siblings. The chance for the kids to bond and just have some fun doing 'kid things' was so important. The closeness you could sense between them was a constant reminder of how important it is to bring brothers and sisters together like this.

This year, camps are planned at Halsey June 17 to 20 and in Gretna July 8 to 11. The camp is free to the youth and is sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Sherwood Foundation and the William and Ruth Scott Family Foundation.